

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
MARSHALL DIVISION**

CHERYL BOUCHARD, §
§
Plaintiff, §
§
v. § Case No. 2:17-cv-552-RSP
§
COMMISSIONER, SOCIAL SECURITY §
ADMINISTRATION, §
§
Defendant. §

MEMORANDUM ORDER

Currently before the Court is Plaintiff's Motion for Attorney's Fees Pursuant to the Equal Access to Justice Act (Dkt. No. 18), filed by Petitioner on October 4, 2018. The motion seeks compensation for 20.6 hours at the adjusted statutory rate of \$192 per hour for 2017 and \$196 per hour for 2018. The Commissioner does not oppose the requested award of fees. (Dkt. No. 19).

The Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA), 28 U.S.C. §2412, allows a prevailing party in litigation against the United States, including a petitioner for Social Security benefits, to recover his attorney's fees "unless the court finds that the position of the United States was substantially justified or that special circumstances make an award unjust." *Id.* at §2412 (d)(1)(a). The Supreme Court has explained that "EAJA fees are determined not by a percent of the amount recovered, but by the 'time expended' and the attorney's 'hourly rate,'" which is currently capped at \$196 per hour. *Gisbrecht v. Barnhart*, 535 U.S. 789, 794, 122 S.Ct. 1817, 152 L.Ed.2d 996 (2002). *See generally, Murkeldove v. Astrue*, 635 F.3d 784, 789 (5th Cir. 2011). The Commissioner does not contend, nor does the Court find, that the position of the government was substantially justified or that any special circumstances exist rendering an award unjust. The Court finds that Petitioner's requested fee is appropriate.

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that Defendant will pay Petitioner \$3,962.40 in EAJA fees.

In accordance with the Supreme Court's decision in *Astrue v. Ratliff*, 130 S.Ct. 2521 (2010), this award will be payable to Petitioner, by delivery to her counsel of record.

SIGNED this 13th day of December, 2018.



ROY S. PAYNE
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE